

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN**

Keith A. Boneske,

Plaintiff,

V.

Assurity Life Insurance Company,

Defendant.

Case No. 21-cv-479

NOTICE OF REMOVAL

Defendant Assurity Life Insurance Company states as follows:

1. An action was commenced by service of the Summons and Complaint (Small Claims) on Assurity Life Insurance Company by U.S. Mail, which was received by Defendant on July 13, 2021, entitled *Keith A. Boneske v. Assurity Life Insurance Company*, venued in the Circuit Court for the State of Wisconsin, Marathon County Court, Case No. 21-SC-1096. Plaintiff alleges in the Complaint that Defendant breached its group accident insurance contract by denying Plaintiff's claim for insurance benefits. Plaintiff's claim is based on a Group Accident Expense insurance policy (the "Policy") Defendant issued to Plaintiff's employer, Peter Trucking LLC, to fund the employer's employee welfare benefit plan (the "Plan") which provided accident expense insurance for eligible employees. Plaintiff's Complaint seeks recovery against Defendant for Policy benefits.

2. The above-described action is one in which this Court has original jurisdiction under the provisions of 28 U.S.C. § 1331 and is one which may be removed to this Court by Defendant pursuant to the provisions of 28 U.S.C. § 1441(a).

3. All of the allegations of the Complaint against Defendant arose pursuant to an employee welfare benefit plan, thus bringing the cause of action under the auspices of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (“ERISA”), 29 U.S.C. § 1001 *et seq.* Pursuant to ERISA, §§ 502(e)(1) and (f), 29 U.S.C. §§ 1132(e)(1) and (f), the district courts of the United States have original jurisdiction over all claims and actions brought under ERISA, without regard to the amount in controversy or the citizenship of the parties.

4. Because this action arises pursuant to the laws of the United States in a matter over which this Court has original jurisdiction, the action “may be removed by the [Defendant] to the district court of the United States for the district and division embracing the place where such action is pending” regardless of whether the Complaint affirmatively pleads a claim arising under ERISA. 28 U.S.C. § 1441(a); *Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. v. Taylor*, 481 U.S. 58 (1987).

5. In addition, to the extent that Plaintiff’s causes of action against Defendant arise from state law, they are entirely preempted under § 514(a) of ERISA, 29 U.S.C. § 1144(a). *Pilot Life Insurance Company v. Dedeaux*, 481 U.S. 41 (1987).

6. Removal is timely under 28 U.S. C. § 1446(b), which allows Defendant 30 days from the earlier of service or receipt of Plaintiff’s Complaint to request removal. The Summons and Complaint were served upon Defendant on July 13, 2021.

7. Attached as **Exhibit A** is a true and correct copies of Plaintiff’s Summons and Complaint. Defendant has not otherwise appeared in this action. No further proceedings have been had therein, and trial has not yet commenced.

8. Also attached as **Exhibit B** is a copy of the Notice of Filing Notice of Removal, which is being filed in the State of Wisconsin Circuit Court for Marathon County.

9. By filing the instant Notice of Removal, Defendant does not waive, and fully reserves, all defenses it may have, including but not limited to defenses of lack of personal jurisdiction, lack of subject matter jurisdiction, and failure to state a claim upon which relief may be granted.

10. Written notice of this Notice of Removal is being provided to Plaintiff by service of this document on Plaintiff.

11. Defendant respectfully requests that the United States District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin accept this Notice of Removal and that it assume jurisdiction of this cause and issue such further orders and processes as may be necessary to bring before it all parties necessary.

Dated: July 30, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

NILAN JOHNSON LEWIS PA

By: /s/ Brandie Morgenroth
William D. Hittler (WI Reg. No. 1029038)
Brandie Morgenroth (WI Reg. No. 0396155)
250 Marquette Avenue South, Suite 800
Minneapolis, MN 55401
Phone: 612-305-7559
Fax: 612-305-7501
Email: whittler@nilanjohnson.com
Email: bmorgenroth@nilanjohnson.com

ATTORNEYS FOR DEFENDANT
ASSURITY LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on July 30, 2021, I electronically filed the foregoing Notice of Removal with the Clerk of the United States District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin, using the CM/ECF system with a true and correct copy being served via mail delivery to:

Keith A. Boneske
245178 State Hwy. 97
Athens, WI 54411

/s/ Brandie Morgenroth

Brandie Morgenroth